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ABSTRACT

Containing many handouts for parents, this manual for parent group trainers provides guidelines for conducting workshops on the nature and value of young children's play and on regulating children's television viewing. In addition to the guidelines, the manual offers basic information about play, suggests hands-on activities, and provides a list of materials needed to set up play stations. A separate section of handouts provides parents with suggestions and guidelines for playing with their children in ways that help them acquire new skills. The material concerning television includes, in handout form, a list of criteria for television program selection and home-activity charts for determining how much time per week individuals watch television and how much time they engage in other activities. (RH)

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# GETTING INVOLVED WORKSHOP GUIDE

# YOUR CHILD AND

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# PLAY TV

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A Manual For The Parent Group Trainer

The Getting Involved Workshop Guides were prepared by staff of

**Head Start of the Lehigh Valley**
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**and the Easton Area School District**
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Sponsored by:
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# YOUR CHILD AND PLAY/TV
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## TRAINER PREPARATION

1. **Review the Getting Involved Booklet entitled** *Your Child and Play and Your Child and TV*

2. Read the "Key Points" in the Workshop Guide.
3. Read the "Statement of Objectives" and "Introduction to Participants".
4. Review the "Workshop Outline".
5. Read "Planning for the Workshop".
6. Select activities and discussions from the Guide to use in your workshop. For example, choose an ice breaker, choose some areas for discussion and appropriate handouts, select a hands-on activity, and some displays. Use the table of contents and summaries to facilitate your selection.
7. Familiarize yourself with your selections. If you are using the filmstrip, then preview it and anticipate related discussions. Prepare to lead the selected activities and discussions in your own way, and in your own words, to suit your particular audience.
8. Sequence your selections, using the "Workshop Outline" as a guide. Review the sequence to determine how to manage the transitions from one activity or discussion to the next. If the sequence does not seem to make a logical progression, try a new order or new selections.
9. Practice and time the Workshop by running through the sequence of activities and discussions. It is a good idea to summarize each activity and discussion as they are done in the workshop. Practice the transitions. Plan for breaks and refreshments.
10. Prepare and collect the materials you will need (eg. handouts, materials for hands-on, and ice-breaker activities, etc.).

# WORKSHOP: LEARNING ATTITUDES

## PLANNING FOR THE WORKSHOP:

Use this list to help you organize the logistics of planning and giving the workshop.

1. How long will your workshop last?
2. What time of day or night will be best for giving your workshop?
3. Who is your audience? Who is your target group?
4. How many people can you accommodate? How many people do you think will attend?
5. Who will contact the participants? How will they be contacted? for example: parent newsletter, note to parent, personal contact, local newspaper, PTA announcement, fliers, posters, radio. . . . Be sure to include all relevant information. How will you know who will be attending? Who should interested parents call? Will they have to register?
6. What facility will you use? Be certain to arrange for a good facility that will provide enough room for participants. If you are serving refreshments be sure that it is permited in the facility. It is a good idea to check to make sure that the facility will be ready for you the day before the workshop.
7. Who will be responsible for transportation?
   Make sure that the person who is responsible for transportation duties is prepared. (eg. size of vehicle(s) is adequate, gas, map or route, times for pick up and drop off, names of people to transport etc.)
8. What refreshments will be served? Make sure that the person responsible for refreshments has addressed all areas (eg. number of participants, preparations for setting up and serving and clean up, nutritious foods, etc.)
9. Plan to arrive at the workshop site early enough to prepare your environment.
   a. set up the displays
   b. plan seating arrangement
   c. arrange materials for presentation
   d. assure that AV equipment is set up and ready to go
   e. have a sign-in sheet
   f. have name tags prepared
   g. have an agenda prepared
   h. have handouts in order
   i. have evaluation forms ready

# SUGGESTED WORKSHOP OUTLINE –

This workshop is designed to take approximately 2 hours and 10 minutes for completion. However, the trainer may wish to cut down on parts of it, and cut other segments out altogether in order to better suit his parent group and/or time frame.

The following outline suggests an order of procedure (an agenda) for your workshop.

1. **Introduction - Statement of Objectives - Establishment of Definitions - 10 minutes.**
   Welcome the group and introduce yourself. Begin your workshop by reading or stating in your own words the Introduction. Review the Objectives by explaining to the participants what you hope they will learn from your workshop. Clarify any definitions if necessary. Pass out an agenda so that the participants know what to expect next.

2. **Ice Breakers - 15 minutes**
   Move on to your ice breaker by introducing it's purpose. By breaking the group into smaller groups you will facilitate interaction among participants. Be sure to summarize this activity after it is over in order to clearly tie in the experience with the objectives of your workshop. Participants should now have some recognition of their own attitudes toward the subject, as well as insight into how their children experience and learn.

3. **Lectures - Discussions - Activities - 20 minutes**
   For the body of the workshop, vary your delivery system using the techniques of lecturing briefly, drawing on participants' experiences by encouraging and soliciting discussions, and providing hands-on activities.

   Define the subject clearly, then ask for examples from participants. Tell how children develop skills in this area, then ask for illustrations from the participants' daily lives. Emphasize why skill development in this subject area is important. Having established a definition of the subject area, having explained how children learn skills in the subject area, having underlined the importance of acquiring such skills, you have paved the way for spending most of your efforts on helping parents see how important they are in teaching their children the subject - in discussing ways parents can help children learn these skills.

   Use your selection of lectures, discussions, activities, displays and handouts from this guide.

   Summarize the points you have made so far.

4. **Break for Refreshments - 15 minutes**
   You have spent considerable time getting the participants comfortable and getting them "into" the topic, so don't let the break and refreshment period become awkward. If the group does not feel comfortable enough to talk freely while eating, then you could structure this time also. Use the environmental displays to draw out conversation, or elicit conversation about the participants' children. Use the time to answer questions about your lectures or about the behavior of participants' children.

5. **Lectures - Discussions - Activities - 20 minutes**
   Continue on from #3. Summarize all key points.

6. **Filmstrip and Discussion of Filmstrip - 15 minutes**
   The filmstrip and Discussion of Filmstrip - 15 minutes
   The filmstrip summarizes what the workshop should have established: defini-

tion of subject (what is math or what is play. . .), how children develop skills in the subject, why it is important, and how parents can help children learn. Reiterate the key points, alert participants to particular segments of the filmstrip which emphasize these points. The important message is that parents play a key role in their children developing skills.

7. **Review and Discuss Handouts - 10 minutes**
   Use the handouts to reinforce the parental role of helping children learn. Encourage parents to refer and use the handout information at home. Answer any questions.

8. **Review Getting Involved booklets - Give Closing Statements - 15 minutes**
   Pass out the *Getting Involved* booklets indicating that they are a valuable resource for participants as they contain the key points made in the workshop and will remind them of their important roles in their children's development. Use the sample closing statement to bring closure to your workshop.

9. **Evaluation Forms - 10 minutes**
   Pass out and request completion of the workshop evaluation forms. Thank each participant for attending.

## KEY POINTS

1) Play is:
   a) a learning medium
   b) the child's most natural way of learning to learn
   c) a skill enhancer
2) Play is a spontaneous activity initiated by the child.
3) Imaginative play helps the child interpret the world. It helps him express his views and also see things from another persons viewpoint.
4) Play serves a variety of needs for the developing child.
   a) increases sensory creativity
   b) promotes and encourages creativity
   c) vehicle for expressing feelings
   d) assists the child to understand his world
   e) provides opportunity to hypothesize and solve problems
   f) develops concepts
5) Play is an activity that promotes high levels of successful experience.
   a) develops self-concept and self-esteem
   b) builds confidence
6) Parents facilitate play behavior and assume a key role in children's play.
7) Play is a lifelong activity and is a source of recreation and education.

## STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES:

Your workshop will help participants:

1) Understand and appreciate the many values of play.

2) See the relationship of children's play to the child's acquisition of new skills.

3) Understand the development nature of play stages.

4) Recognize the key role they take by:
   a) providing materials for play
   b) playing with their children
   c) believing that play is important

5) select children's play items and toys more carefully.

# SAMPLE INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW TO PARTICIPANTS

**Play**

**What is it**

Play is the way a child learns what no one can teach him. It is the child's most natural way of learning. To young children, play is fun; but it is also work. It is through play that young children develop new skills, learn to use their bodies to do the things they want to do, and develop communication and social skills. Play is truly a medium through which learning occurs.

**How Developed**

Use the following exerpt as a basis for presentation.

– How does play develop? To begin with, the young baby's initial play – that of observing and handling the body parts, watching and touching your face, hands and body – leads him on his way to see himself distinct from others. Through this basic early play, the baby learns to recognize where he "begins and ends". It gives him a very concrete sense of himself.

Soon, play takes on a new form. The child becomes more and more in control. If he wants his fingers to move, they do. His play assumes a search and discovery of ways to manipulate and affect the outside environment. Parents assist in this early play exploration when they offer continuous, warm, playful contact.

After the baby is able to get around on his own, his play opportunities extend well beyond his own body and the confines of his infant seat. He becomes the explorer, discovering all to be found around him. Things that are movable hold great interest for him. Balls that roll, string toys to pull all help satisfy his seemingly insatiable appetite for "travel".

When parents provide children with play experiences and exposure to a variety of objects and toys they help them get acquainted with the varying properties of the many things in his world. Stuffed animals, living room pillows, sponges are all squeezable and soft. The pots and pans from the kitchen are hard, shiny and noisy when banged together. What is the point? Well, a tremendous amount of learning occurs through this kind of activity. The child gathers information about cause and effect, discovers what different things do and how to effect what they do. The child gathers all of this information through free exploration of his environment.

As the child continues to learn and master new skills through play, he develops a growing interest in results. He has a strong desire to master certain tasks. This is a major step forward. Just watch as the older pre-school child approaches a puzzle, legos and blocks, climbing gym, etc. His need to master tasks can really be seen in the way he approaches and interacts with other children in dramatic play.

Make-believe. Pretend. These are terms used to describe the very valuable dramatic play of children. Children watch people and things around them and often act out what they see. When they dramatize and pretend children are working hard at interpreting and understanding the meaning of the world around them.

When we understand and take part in the play of the child as he grows, we are providing the greatest childhood learning vehicle there is.

Re-state:

Play is the way a child learns what no one can teach him.

Remarks:

This evening we're going to think about, talk about and experience play. We'll

deepen our understanding of the power of play – play as an absorbing and spontaneous activity. We hope that you will increase your awareness and appreciation for the enormous and necessary contributions play and creative activities can make toward the child's ability to think and learn.

To the trainer:

Tell the parents that they are going to start the evening by participating in an activity which makes them do some thinking about their own childhood play experiences.

## ICE-BREAKER: When I was a child – Now I'm a "grown-up."

**Introduction lecture:**

Where and how a person played during their childhood effects their attitudes toward the play of their own children. Remember that many of our likes and dislikes, our attitudes, beliefs and values are offered to our children for acceptance, imitation or rejection. For instance, take the person who rarely travels or goes out. He might be heard to say that he's much the same now as he was as a child – unable to leave the backyard to play. The reverse is sometimes true, too. Some people have difficulty playing and just generally having fun in their own home. Perhaps these parents/adults were discouraged from playing in the house – always being asked to "be quiet" or "go outside to play". It is true that the home is not a "playground", but we can think through how to make play space and play time available for children. For the important aspect of play is that it is spontaneous in nature, not so much pre-planned like a scheduled trip to the playground. When children engage in active play they are likely to giggle, laugh, or shout for joy. Running, jumping, balancing, climbing are some of the ways that the child tests his growing body to see what it can do. It is through the various activities of play that the child discovers the possibilities and limitations of his efforts.

We have been talking in general terms about play as it involves physical or mental activity for the sake of amusement, diversion and growth. It is the way for a child to "try out" life and discover his world.

We will start the evening by doing a little experiment. (Break up into groups of 3 to 5.)

To the trainer:

**Instructions for ice-breaker:**

1) Participants are to close their eyes. Tell them to try and see themselves when they were young children at play. Remind them that they will probably see themselves at different ages, doing different things. Ask them to keep the images and continue to experience them.
2) Allow for comments.
3) Having done this part of the ice-breaker, give each participant the ice-breaker hand-out sheets to work from. Have each group select a recorder to summarize and include all of the individual comments and responses from the ice-breaker worksheets if so desired.

**Activity Follow-up**

Encourage parents to discuss their responses within the smaller groups for a while. Tell them to begin thinking about their own children's play habits and talk about those. Ask the parents to relate some of their own play experiences to the kinds of things their children do.

- Do they think that their own childhood play experiences affect how their children play?
- Do they feel more compelled to participate in their children's play?

Why? Why not?

- Is there a role that they think parents should take in their children's play? What? Why? How?

Try to relate the discussion and remarks to the importance of their own children's play and begin the discussion about play characteristics.

# LECTURES-DISCUSSIONS

**"Play Characteristics and the value of Play"**

Play is the most complete of all educational processes. It develops:

- concentration
- initiative
- imagination
- high levels of interest

In fact, play is a complete educational process because it significantly influences the *intellect,* the *emotions* and the *body* of the child.

- In order to make the next hands-on activity meaningful, you will need to briefly expand on the characteristics and values of play. The following discussion statements will help you set the stage for the follow-up activity.

Everyone knows how much children love to play. If you watch children at play, you will see the *intensity of their involvement* and the pure *pleasure* that they get from it. Too often, though, we discount the validity of play as a learning medium because we separate fun from work – learning from play.

When we take a closer look at our children at play, what do we see going on? We might see children building with blocks, making complicated networks of "highway" or planning and developing "space stations". When they play "pretend", what we call dramatic play, you might see someone calling for the "doctor" with the "patient" lying on the floor being attended by her "mother". Perhaps the "doctor" will soon appear.

The children are being *imaginative* and *spontaneous.* Yet, what they dramatize is helping them *understand* that particular situation. This is the marvel of dramatic play; by "playing out" the situation children are more able to interpret it.

Children will often *act out situations* which disturb them. When children create and recreate such situations, they begin to *understand their own feelings.* At the same time, they increase their *ability to cope* with difficulties in their lives.

At the beginning of the workshop, we mentioned the importance of play as it contributes to the child's *self-concept* and *confidence.* When children dramatize and act out real life situations they are able to *exert* greater *control* over their world than they actually have. This helps build the child's *self-confidence* and increase his understanding of the adult world.

As the child "experiments" with toys he is also developing many *concepts.* He sees *similarities* and *differences;* he has to use *logic* and *solve problems.* He begins to see the relationship of *cause and effect* – Why this happens when I do that.

# HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

"Play Stations"

Introduction to Hands-on Activity:

1) Refer to Environmental Display to review the key characteristics of play and use as intro to participants.
2) Review the recommended Play stations and select as many as you need so that they can "play" in smaller groups (3-5). The suggested play stations for this exercise are selected because they deal with problem-solving and the related skills of questioning, experimenting, exploring different ways of doing things - trying alternatives. In addition, some of the stations can be used to convey dramatic play properties of self-expression, interpretation of the world, social and emotional development. Select and use based on your preference.

Objectives:

1) Provide direct experience with play medium.
2) Illustrate the characteristics of play.
3) Help in the understanding of play as a learning medium.
4) Facilitate levels of involvement by participants.
5) Discover the multi-directional aspects of play.
6) Demonstrate that play is fun.

# PLAY "STATIONS" MATERIALS LIST:

**Play Station I** - Fingerpainting
Materials needed:

- Fingerpaint and spoon
- water
- sponge
- paper
- apron or smock (optional)
- newspaper (for covering table tops)

**Play Station II** - Blocks & construction
Materials needed:

- hardwood blocks
- small cars and trucks
- people figures (optional)

**Play Station III** - Table toys (If you select only puzzles be sure to include variety)
Materials needed:

- puzzles - knobbed, inlay, topical, etc.
- stacking cups
- peg board(s)
- legos
- bead stringing

**Play Station IV** - Playdough/Clay
Materials needed:
- play dough
- clay (one or both)
- accessories (cookie cutters, knives, tooth picks, etc.)

**Play Station V** - Water Play
Materials needed:
- dishtubs (at least 2)
- squeeze bottles (empty shampoo bottles, etc.)
- funnel, cups, containers, etc.
- water

**Discussion guideline** and/or handout for each Play Station and participant

1) What can children learn from these materials?

2) How does the activity involve the child in the following play characteristics-

   a) Spontaneity

   b) imagination
      dramatics

   c) emotional and social growth (expressing feelings)

   d) making choices or decisions

   e) learning concepts

3) What "real" learning took place?

For the trainer-

Refer to the Environmental Display and the "Key Points" to help you summarize the value of Play for participants.

The Follow-up Discussion to the "Play Station" activities should include the group's responses to the "discussion guideline" for each station. In addition, the following remarks that pertain to each Play Station will help you elaborate and clarify the play characteristics and values.

**Play Stations** - follow-up guide for trainer

**Play Station I - Fingerpainting**

1) Fingerpainting is a *mental process* as well as a physical one; it is a *mindbuilding* activity.
2) It is *multi-sensory* - children learn what it "feels" like. This helps children *get ready* to learn in more *abstract* ways.
3) The child sees a cause and effect relationship and produces the effect that takes on a visible form.
4) The child also *uses his muscles* and derives many sensations by the movements he makes. There is a relationship between what he sees and what he feels.
5) He *learns concepts* - color differences, color blending and shading.
6) He is learning to create both subtle effects as well as complex and rhythmic design. His designs can express many imaginative thoughts.

7) He exhibits total *control* as he easily makes impressions through his work.
8) All of this contributes to encourage the child in *experimentation, persistence,* and *expression.*

**Play Station II - Blocks**

1) Block play can provide the child with an understanding of math, physics, geography and more.
2) Playing with blocks gives a child the opportunity to *think, plan, and solve problems.*
   - "How can I make a barn for the animals?"
   - "Why do the blocks keep falling down?"
   - "Two of these blocks put together are the same size as this one."
3) This experimentation leads children to discover concepts:
   - equivalences (leads to fractions)
   - size, shape, quantity, direction
   - laws of physics - gravity, balance
   - spatial relationships
4) The child can learn to work, share, cooperate and talk with other children - *Socialize.*
5) The children can *pretend* and *dramatize.*

**Play Station III - Table Toys**

1) These play items help the child test himself at *problem solving.*
2) The child can work *independently.* The materials are usually "self-correcting".
3) The child experiences *success* and builds *concentration.*
4) Many fine motor and visual *skills* are enhanced.

**Play Station IV - Playdough**

1) If the child participates in making the playdough he is learning to *follow directions,* measure and mix.
2) Playdough has all the elements of good *dramatic play.* The child is the creator and will often make "pizza pie" or "cakes" or perhaps a "monster". With each of these he is *able to express* himself *imaginatively* and *emotionally.*
3) Modeling with playdough develops *concentration.* It is the type of play that allows the child to impose his own time and limitation.

**Play Station V - Water**

1) Increases the *interest span* of children.
2) Children enjoy the feel of water. Children derive much pleasure from water play and this type of play experience encourages them to *explore* and *try* out *different ways* of handling it.
3) Playing with water leads the child to *spontaneous* exercises in control. In addition, the child learns to *make predictions,* especially in *estimating* quantity.
4) Pouring and filling with water gives the child a feeling that he can *control and manage his world.*
5) When children play side-by-side with water you are apt to find *socialization* occuring in all of its many forms.
   You will see children talking, sharing, laughing as they experience and experiment with water.

# WORKSHOP CLOSING:

**Film Strip: Your Child and Play and TV**

To the trainer:

The filmstrip can be used as a closing to the workshop. It can serve as a summary and reinforcement of the lecture, activities and discussion. (But feel free to use it wherever and however it best meets your needs.)

See handouts for possible distribution and/or discussion.
The handouts can be copied and compiled into a pamphlet entitled: "Let's be Playmates".

Sample Closing #1

Parents are the first resource for children's play and learning. Join in your children's play. Watch how they play with a toy and try playing with it yourself. Avoid telling the child "What to do". You can show your child different things to "try and do" through your own play.

Invite your child to participate in your recreation. Remember, children seldom differentiate between work and play. They are eager to join you in your household chores washing the car or doing the shopping. Children value the activity and also the time spent with you.

Given plenty of opportunities to express themselves through play, children will learn to like themselves and others. Our responsibility is to provide the time, space and materials that encourage play. When we provide the play materials we are really expressing our recognition and understanding of the value of play.

Most importantly, children at play experience high levels of success. They experience power over their world, a chance to lay plans, to judge what is best and to create the sequence of events.

Play is testing and exploring, experimenting and manipulating. It has the added dimension of being a self-directed and spontaneous activity which the player does with complete involvement.

The spirit of play is vital to us all and remains an important feature of our lives.

Sample Closing #2

**The Importance of Play**

Play is a medium for learning. In order for children to become creative individuals, they must be able to play, to explore materials and equipment, and most of all, to express themselves. Children need to interact with others who understand the value of play, because play is the child's work.

Children play in many settings; at home, both indoors and outdoors, in organized and unorganized groups. Children enjoy playing alone with adults, one or several children, or with imaginary friends. Children's preferences for play partners change as they grow, develop, and explore new interests. Play offers the child opportunities to learn, discover, develop creative abilities and to gain mastery of the many concepts to be learned in life. When a child plays, he is growing and developing his muscles, mind, creative capacities and social skills.

We must recognize how important and significant spontaneous play is in the life of a child. As the child plays, he learns to communicate verbally with others, to join groups in acceptable ways, and interact with others so that they can accept his role in the play situation. Through play situations, children learn to enjoy one another's company. Children who have similar interests in play activities often develop strong friendships. Children also learn through play that conflicts are indeed unpleasant, with adult support they can learn to make efforts to solve these conflicts.

Adults should be aware that the space, time of day, and the setting all influence the child's play. Watch and observe your child at play and you will see the concentration and involvement he has while engaged in play. You will come to know just how important it is to your child to have his efforts recognized.

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# Play: Ice-breaker Work Sheet

"Playing When I Was A Child"

Were you given time to play? If so, how much time of your own?

Did you find yourself encouraged or discouraged in certain types of play because of your sex? Explain.

List your most active kinds of play as a child.
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Where did most of your play take place?
____In the house (living room, own room kitchen, other _____.
____In the backyard
____At a friend's house
____At the playground
____Street or _____ alley
And, which of these was your favorite place?
Why?

When you played, did you generally:
____play with playmates?
____play alone?
Were your playmates mostly:
____brothers and sisters
____other relatives
____neighbors
____children you went to school with

When you played with other children were you usually:
____leader
____follower
and which did you like the most?

What were some of the different characteristics of your playmates: Were they similar, different?

What was the most fun play activity you ever did?

Did you consider yourself:
____a leader
____a follower
____a mediator or referee

Were you a television watcher? ____
If so, what were your 3 favoite programs? (i.e. - comedy acts that made you laugh, serials or adventure stories, etc.)
1)
2)
3)

Do you think that television was an important play item for you when you were a child?
Why?



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# ENVIRONMENTAL DISPLAY

**Play is the most complete educational process.**

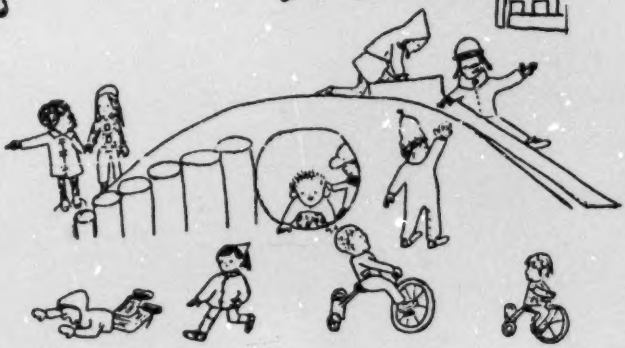
**Children learn to:**

Dramatize in order to understand their world.

Act out Situations

see the other's point of view by trying on their "hat" for a change

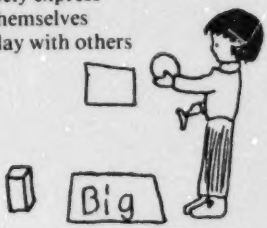
be in control

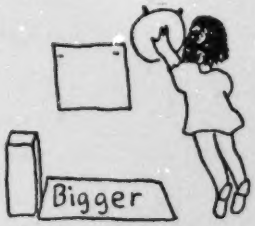


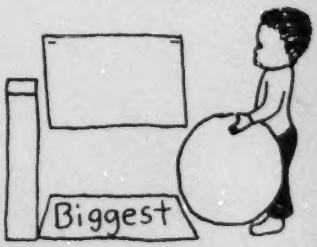
use their bodies

be spontaneous

freely express themselves and play with others




develop concepts and make judgements

love and be loved!

express their feelings through play

be creative

learn!

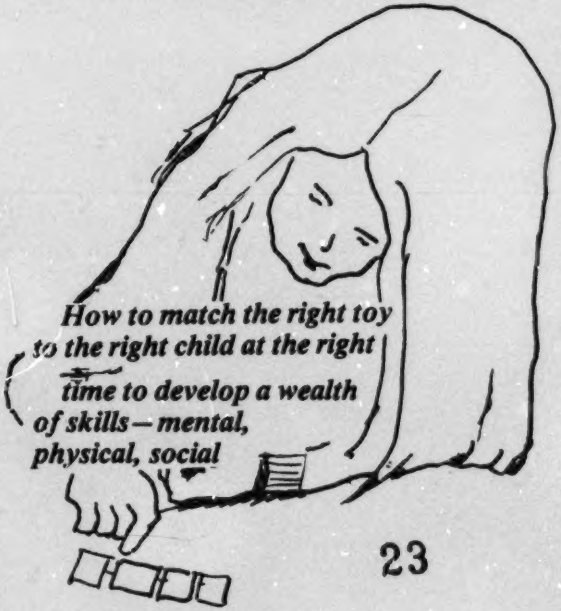
use their imagination

develop interest

# Toys That Reach And Teach Kids Of All Ages

**Source:**
**Brian Sutton-Smith, Ph.D.**

**What kinds of toys are appropriate at different ages?**




### Baby

**A baby needs toys that do something when he does something to them.** Then he searches for the ways in which he can make his playthings do different things. Trying to find out what makes things happen is an early form of reasoning. He is learning that his own explorations can make a difference. He discovers that rattles make different sounds depending on the way he holds them. The baby mirror reflect different things according to the angle or hand in which he holds it. The musical mobile makes sounds if he shakes his crib. Squeeze toys squeak if he presses them hard enough.

### Toddler and Preschooler

**A toddler or a preschooler can do more and can react more to what happens after he has made his first move.** The toddler truck can be pushed by hand, it can run by itself, it can bang into blocks. A child experiments with velocity and direction playing with his truck either with or without its

### Adolescents

**As adolescence approaches** all the usual sports equipment, model construction sets, art equipment, more abstract board and card games (chess, checkers, poker, word games) are appropriate. Indoor sports games such as Ping-Pong, darts, miniature hockey tables are popular. There are craft activities: sculpture sets, flower sets, jewelry, tool chests. Some girls like to collect stuffed animals or have shelves of dressed miniature dolls.

The adolescent is also capable of making his own games and own toys. While this is not the way things usually have been, it is an emerging trend in our culture. Those who have had parents who played with them and made up play with them (puppets, acting, stories, jokes), and then have gone to schools where they learn some of their subjects through games (called game simulation), become increasingly sophisticated in making up their own games. Adolescents have modeled academic interests such as international affairs, or economics after their favorite board games, complete with boards, dice,

load of blocks. He stacks blocks into towers of ever greater precariousness which may or may not come tumbling down. A toddler can feed his teddy bear and put it to bed. Parents still fill their little girls' rooms predominantly with babies and dolls, whereas they give their sons many more varied toys that help them believe in and understand how to manipulate the object world around them. Girls should not be denied these advantages. Both sexes during the preschool years can gain from play with model houses, stores, gas stations, hamburger stands, along with blocks, toy cars and miniature people - all allow the child a great variety of world control. A young child is strongly concerned with his own sense of power so that the opportunity to control models of the adult world gives the player a sense of mastery.

Then there are all the art materials, crayons, clay, Plasticine, paints, and paper and scissors, which are among the best of all activities, because they encourage the child's innovation and creativity.



**An Ideal Toy Has Certain Qualities:**

– Realistic Model
of some aspect of the world

– Working Model
that can be managed by the child

– Assembled Model
capable of being disassembled and recomposed by the child

And:
It provided parts that can be assembled into alternative models by the child.

pieces, players, and so on. A most valuable trend in the future would be to have adolescents plan and construct the toys, games, and activities that they think are appropriate to children of different age levels. It seems important that in an innovative socity, more children should have the experience of being innovative themselves. Learning to make toys rather than just playing with those already available, or to make up games rather than just to play the familiar well-practiced games, is a sure path to such innovation.

**Elementary School Age**

**Children from six years onward** enjoy board and card games. These games are all exercises in decision-making and in dealing with success and failure; with luck and deprivation. These are important elements in the character of modern man.

This is the age for doctor kits, tea sets, the doll's house, band sets, stamps, paint sets, more complex trucks and trains, Frisbees, roller skates and construction models. By and large, it is my opinion that one should not give toy guns to children. Ours is a violent world and such self-denial can serve as a symbol to politicians that we want the world to change. We want gun control and armament reduction.

# LET'S BE PLAYMATES

## An Activity Guide for Parents and Children

# Introduction

Parents are their child's first and best teacher. They help the child develop the ability to communicate, ask questions, take care of himself, learn to get along with others and acquire new skills. The Activity Guide is written with this in mind. Invite your child to play with you or help him to get started on his own.

As you work and play with your child remember that it is important for him to be successful, to have your support when he needs help, and to have your understanding and encouragement when he makes mistakes. Use these activities as they are written or expand and create new activities on your own.

Children need opportunities to express their ideas. Talk with them, listen to them, answer their questions, explain things and ask them questions. Include them in everyday activities like cleaning, cooking, shopping. Help them organize their play items and make suggestions to them about things to do. Read through this pamphlet and try playing with some of the games and activities. Be a playmate for your child.

# ART RECIPES

**With all recipes - allow children to help measure and mix.**

Section I

**Paste**

You need:
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup flour

You do:
- mix the flour and water in a bowl with a spoon or your hands. (For a more lasting paste: put the flour into a saucepan and slowly stir in the water. Bring to a boil over low heat. Keep stirring until thick and shiny. Store in a jar with a lid).

Section II

**Finger Paint**

You need:
- paste (home-made) see above
- a few drops of food coloring
- 1 or 2 spoonfuls of soap flakes

You do:
1. Mix the flakes, coloring and paste in a bowl.
2. Let children paint on cookie sheet or table top. The paint will wash off all surfaces except *wood.*
3. First put a few drops of water down, then a dab of paint- and watch the fun!
4. An old shirt for a smock.

Tips: Try and do by available running water or basin for rinsing off.

Section III

You need:
- 1 ½ cups flour
- ½ cup salt
- ½ cup oil
- few drops of food coloring (if you wish)

You do:
1. Mix the flour and salt in a bowl.
2. Slowly add water and oil.
3. Shape into a ball.

Children can roll it, poke it, make animals, use cookie cutters, tooth picks, etc.
Place unused dough in a container with a lid, or a plastic bag. Store in refrigerator. If it gets too sticky- add flour.

**Activities for Parents and Children that Can be used Out-of-Doors**

Water play — bucket of water and paint brush - designate a specific area where the child can paint with water such as fence, steps, house foundation.
— tub or bucket for foot bathing or wading.

Sand Play or mud play (Specific place to dig).
— Molding wet sand or mud into pies, cakes, buildings, roads.

# LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

The more you talk to and with your child, the greater the chance that your child will be a competent learner. By the time kindergarten arrives, if your child has had many conversations and teaching moments with you, more than likely she will be familiar with:

| | |
|---|---|
| — colors | — parts of the body |
| — shapes | — positional words such as on, under, between, etc. |
| — sizes | — concept words such as some, more, less |
| — names of things | — her own name, age and birthdate |
| — numerals | — letters |

All children learn at different rates, so remember to respect each child's individuality. In the meantime, we are including some activities to try at home that encourage talking, developing the eyes and hands for writing and reading and acquainting children with written symbols - pictures, letters, words.

# ACTIVITIES TO DO

**Sort things:** clothing, silverware, playing cards, buttons, coins, nails or screws, pictures, colored cubes or cardboard squares, pieces of cloth, animal cutouts, lids, crayons.

**String things:** macaroni, buttons, straws cut into small pieces, beads, cheerios, pieces of cardboard with holes, styrofoam circles, plastic lids.

**Pour things:** rice, sand, dirt, juice, milk, water.

**Color things:** paper, newspaper, cardboard, coloring books, comic strips, old cards.

**Cut things:** paper, newspaper, cardboard, magazine pictures, ribbon scraps, cloth if possible, coloring book figures.

**Paste things:** what the child has cut out, pictures of animals, calendar pictures, magazine clippings, newspaper pictures, photographs in an album, letter to grandparents, collages of anything, weed pictures, macaroni, seed designs.

**Trace things:** hands, feet, shapes, blocks, cookie cutters, lids, coloring book pictures, cardboard cutouts, small toys.

**Listen to things:** stories, records, radio, conversations, songs, musical instruments, birds, people on the street.

## ACTIVITIES TO DO

**Read things:** nursery rhymes, stories, comics, letters from relatives, signs, food labels on boxes and cans, magazine titles, the calendar, names of books, names of people, own name.

**Talk about things:** the weather, clouds, seasons, animals, birds, people, objects and their uses (tools of the kitchen, the garage, the bathroom), a child's activities, trips, experiences as a baby, parent's work.

**Learning about letters and words:**

1. Many adults believe that it is important for children to learn early to recognize and name letters of the alphabet. They drill children in this skill. Actually, learning the ABC's is just a small part of learning about reading. Children will learn to name the letters of the alphabet without adults forcing and rushing them to do so. Parents can help their children learn the names in a number of ways. They can read to their children, and point out and help them read words around them. They can give them crayons or pencils and paper for writing practice. They can provide toy alphabet letters for their children to play with. Such activities will teach children a great deal about the reading process in an enjoyable way.
2. Children can learn a lot about reading by writing. Many preschool and school-age children like to make up stories about the pictures they draw. You can write down what they say about their pictures. If it is brief and you print big enough, your child may want to try and trace over the words that you wrote with a bolder or darker flair pen.

   or

3. Ask your child to tell you a story. Write down what he or she ways and read it together. Let your child make pictures about the story.
4. Words are everywhere. Help your children learn how to say them and what they mean. Make use of everyday activities:

   Words are everywhere, not just in books. They are on the milk carton and the cereal box. They are on billboards and on the mailbox. They are on toys. Even the boxes that toys come in have words printed on them.

   Children like to try to read words around them, and aren't afraid to guess at their meanings. For example, a child may point to the word stamped on an orange and say "orange", when the world really is "Sunkist". The child's guess, though incorrect, makes sense and shows that the child knows what reading is all about. Praise your children for making guesses about the words they see. Children learn to ready by trying to read, and by using everything they know to figure out what words say.

   There are many ways you can help children learn about reading, using words that you encounter every day.

   - When walking or riding down the street, point to words on traffic signs. (We have to stop here because that sign says 'Stop' ".)

   When shopping at the grocery store, ask your child to find things for you. When the child brings the box or can to you, point to the name printed on the container and read it. ("Thank you for getting the bread. See? It says 'Bread' right here.")

   - When you get home from the store, have your child help you put things away. Occasionally point to an obvious word on a label and ask, "What do you think this word is?"

# COUNTING PRACTICE

Section I

Let Your Child –

- Count the number of plates, forks, knives, spoons, glasses, etc. for a family meal.
- Count the number of windows, doors, lamps, chairs, etc. in the house or room(s).
- Stand about 3 feet from an open box and try throwing clothes pins or buttons in it. She can count how many land in the box.

Matching

Section II

1. Make games from food labels by saving some that are used often (labels from cans, boxes, etc.) and stack those that are alike together.
2. Playing grocery store - stacking same kinds of cans and boxes together.
3. Let your child help you sort dishes, glasses, etc. and stack the ones that are alike together.
4. Put socks together to make pairs after the laundry is done.
5. Sort the silverware properly and put it away.

Comparing Sizes

Section III

1. Choose any object and ask the child to tell how big it is. They will find this hard to do. Suggest that they compare it to something that it is bigger than. (Example - Table is bigger than the chair.) Then ask the child to find something larger – until you've reached the largest, the room itself. This is also fun to do outdoors.
2. Name an object and try to find something smaller, then something smaller than that. . . (Example, Table, chair, cup, etc.)
3. Spend an evening measuring the people in your family and let your child figure out who is the tallest, shortest, who has the biggest hands, smallest hands, etc.

Sorting Things

Section IV

Suggestions for sorting –

1. Sort the laundry into light and dark colored clothes or whites and colored.
2. Fold and sort laundry by putting all the towels together, socks together, underwear together, etc.
3. Clean up child's room by sorting different kinds of toys into different boxes or onto certain shelves. Label each box with a picture for one kind of toy, such as a game, a book, a doll, a car or truck, etc.
4. Put groceries away by package size, type of food, type of package, etc.

Other things to sort:

- clothing
- silverware
- deck of cards
- buttons
- coins
- nails or screws
- pictures
- pieces of cloth
- lids

# GAMES

**Call Ball**

One player stands in the center of the circle. She throws the ball in the air and calls the name of a person in the circle who runs forward to catch the ball on the first bounce (use a large ball). She becomes the thrower if she gets the ball before its second bounce.

**Sight and Touch Game**

**Game 1**

Collect several small toys or other objects. Place them on a table and cover with a cloth. Children stand around the table while the cover is removed for a few seconds. Replace cover and ask children to name as many of the toys as they can remember.

**Game 2**

Place items on the table or floor under a cover. Expose them for a few seconds. Have the children close their eyes while one object is removed and hidden. Children open their eyes and try to recall which object is missing.

**Game 3**

Display several objects for a few seconds then cover them. Have child reach under the cover and describe and identify what they are holding.

**Waste Paper Basket Toss**

Draw a foul line back about 3 to 6 feet or more (as the children improve) from the waste paper basket (or a box, etc). Let the children take turns trying to throw a tin foil ball into the basket or box from behind the foul line. You can make counting games out of this too!

**Hit the Pin**

A plastic bottle or milk carton can be used for this game. Draw a circle and place the carton inside the circle. Draw a foul line back about 4 to 6 feet (farther as the child improves), and let children take turns rolling a ball and trying to knock the "pin" over.

**I Like to be Tall** (game) follow the directions

I stand on my tiptoes to make myself tall.
I bend my knees to make myself small.
I like to be tall. (Stand on tiptoes)
I like to be small. (Stoop)
But I like my own height best of all.
This is a good "morning wake-up" exercise.

**Mystery Bag Game**

The mystery bag activity arouses the child's interest and curiosity. It is a good way for the child to "feel" similarities and differences and decide which object to select based on her/his sense of touch.

You might vary the original activity and have the child select an item that feels:

HANDOUT

hard, soft, rough, smooth, thick, thin, big, little, etc. You may also go outside and select the outdoor items like tree bark, leaves, twigs, stones, rocks, etc. and use these objects in similar ways. Try the first activity that follows on the next page.

**Mystery Bag**
**Activity**

Materials:
1. Some common household items that can be collected and placed in a shopping bag (utensils, clothespins, sponge, soap bar, comb, toothbrush, cup, etc.)
2. A shopping bag or something similar to place the objects inside.

Procedure:
1. Select items that the child is familiar with and place them in the bag. (Find some items that are very different from each other - sponge, block); and some items that are more similar - clothespin, lipstick container.
2. Name an item that is in the bag and ask the child to reach in - (hold the bag up so that your child cannot see in) and feel around to try and select the object that you named.
3. As the child selects an object, you might ask her/him what to name the object and tell you what it is used for (e.g. - toothbrush - "brushing my teeth").

**Floating and Sinking Game**

Have a collection of objects that sink and float. Also, two boxes labeled "Things that Sink" and "Things that Float". Have the objects all mixed up in another container. Fill a bowl (see-through kind if you have one) with water and let the child experiment placing the objects in to determine whether they "sink" or "float". He/she can put them into the appropriate box. (Remember, your child needs help with the words on the boxes).

**More Games for the Great Outdoors**

1. **Simon Says**
   Include things to do like "hop 3 times," jumping, walking on tiptoes, walking on a line of the sidewalk, running, jumping, jumping jacks, sit-ups, tumbles, toe touching, spin-around, etc.
2. **Red-Light - Green Light**
   Caller counts to ten and turns around to say "Red Light" at which point the children must stop. Caller turns back to the children, says "Green Light" and continues. Children must try to reach the caller before he turns to say "Red Light". First one to reach becomes the "Caller".
3. **Snake**
   Using a clothes line or rope, two persons hold at both ends and "wiggle" the rope close to the ground. Children start about 10-15 feet away, run and jump over the wiggling rope.
4. **Limbo**
   Using a clothes line as above. This time children pass under the rope. Start real high with the rope and gradually lower it.
5. **Going for walks**
   – Try to *skip over the lines* on a sidewalk.
   – Playground or field - **walking backwards.**
   – **Counting steps** - How many to the telephone pole, to the corner, etc.
   – **Strides** - Take long strides and short ones, quick or slow, **joining together** etc.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**High Low Water**

Two players hold an end of the rope one at each end. The players holding the rope raise and lower the rope. Children step or jump over the rope (the rope is the pretend water). Players who miss jumping over the rope become the new holders.

**Bean Bags**

Tossing bean bags can be done similar to ball activities. Bean bags can be tossed in the air, tossed from one hand to the other by one child, or two or more children can play overhand or underhand catch, toss bean bags into buckets placed 5-6 feet away from the player, number coffee cans 1-2-3-5 and have player toss bags in them saying the numbers.

**Follow the Leader**

Players form a straight line one behind the other. The players must do whatever the leader does. The leader is the first person in line. If the leader hops all the others hop too. The player who doesn't hop is out of the game. Leaders can be changed as the leader runs out of ideas. The next person in line then becomes the leader.

**Blind Man's Bluff**

Players form a circle facing inward. When a player is selected to be the blind man and is blindfolded and placed in the center of the circle. The players in the circle join hands and skip or walk around in circle form. The blind man may call "Stop" at anytime. At this time all players stand in place. The blind man points in any direction. The person pointed to by the blind man's finger is the next blind man. Blind man keeps pointing until he points directly at a circle player.

More things to do

- Backyard picnics - eating outside is fun even with your peanut butter sandwiches, raw carrots and milk.

- **Color walk**
  Go on a color walk around the block, looking for everything that is one color.

- **I Spy**
  A child says "I spy something yellow (or any other color)." He adds one clue at a time until someone guesses the right object. "Its round". "It will bounce". "A ball," answers a child, who then spies something another color.

**Playground Trips**

**Library Visits**
Select books to read at the library. Have the librarian help in your selection.

# READING ALOUD TO YOUR CHILD

**Some Helpful Hints**

1. Pick a regular time for reading every day.
2. Choose a time with no interruptions from television or telephone.
3. Find a place that is quiet and cozy.
4. Make sure that your child can see the pictures *and* words.
5. Read with expression.

Have fun reading to your child!

**Other activities to do:**

- If your child has a favorite book he can "read" the story to you sometime in his own words.
- Make a book together - begin with childrens own story and encourage them to draw pictures to go with it. Read it as part of story time - it gives them a good idea of how books are made and that words are just written speech.
- Have the children touch the pictures, turn the pages.

**Some Recommended Books to Read With Your Child**

| Author | Title |
|---|---|
| Alexander | ____Maybe a Monster |
| | ____Noise in the Night |
| Bate | ____Little Rabbit's Loose Tooth |
| Brown | ____Goodnight Moon |
| Carle | ____A Very Hungry Caterpillar |
| | ____One, Two, Three to the Zoo |
| Ets | ____Gilberto and the Wind |
| Eastman | ____Are You my Mother? |
| Freeman | ____Cordoroy |
| Flack | ____Angus and the Ducks |
| Gag | ____Millions of Cats |
| Hoban | ____Bedtime for Frances |
| Keats | ____Peter's Chair |
| Lionni | ____Frederick |
| | ____Inch by Inch |
| Munari | ____Bruno Munari's Zoo |
| Roy | ____Curious George |
| Suess | ____To Think I Saw It on Mulberry Street |
| Zion | ____The Plant Sitter |

# YOUR CHILD AND TV

## KEY POINTS:

1) Children like to watch TV.
2) Children benefit more when they watch TV with their parents and discuss the program(s) together.
3) TV can be made more useful when parents play a key role in selecting and limiting what and how much TV children watch.
4) Children must be helped to see that TV viewing is just one of many activities and involvement.

To the Trainer:

Children enjoy watching TV as one of their "play" activities. The purpose of this additional workshop section is to inform parents of the positive uses of TV. There is a lot written on the effects of TV commercials, violence, stereotype, etc. on the viewer. It is important to share some general information about this before entering into the discussion on constructive use of TV. Refer to the "Getting Involved" booklet for ideas and to the workshop outline that follows. Use the ice-breaker as a lead in to some factual TV information.

# WORKSHOP OUTLINE: YOUR CHILD AND TV

Part I - Introduction

**Icebreaker**

The ice-breaker is designed to briefly overview children's television viewing. It provides participants with facts they may already know as well as new information about children's television habits. Distribute and have participants read each item together and write down their responses.

This activity can be done in group unison, individually or in small groups. Review the answers together and allow opportunity for comments. Refer to the Activity: "What do you know about children's TV" and the answer guide for follow-up. The completion of the ice-breaker activity leads into the review or the "TV Fact Sheet".

**Review**

- How much television children watch may be a point of interest. By the time most children finish high school they will have spent more hours watching TV than spent in school.
- *(15,000 hours of TV. 11,000 of school).
- *Children watch an average of twenty-five to thirty hours of television a week.
- *The only activity that occupies more of a child's time than TV is sleep.
- *98% of U.S. homes, or 72.9 million homes, have a television set.

**Handout:** "TV Fact Sheet"

Review the TV fact sheet with workshop participants. Allow time for comments. "Were you surprised by the information?" etc.

*Information from the ACT Guide to Children's Television

To the Trainer:

Part II - Information & Discussion Outline

We call this section "Watching TV - What Really Happens?" For workshop presenters interested in further pursuing the effects of television before discussing TV's uses - here are some statements, remarks, and questions. They can be shared matter-of-factly or for purposes of discussion and comment. Select as desired.

**"Watching TV - What Really Happens?"**

**Statements & Questions:**

1. Do you suppose that the development of a child who spends much of her time viewing moving images on the TV screen is enhanced the same as a child who spends that amount of time in active play and learning?
   —Comments, discussion, etc.
2. Many TV critics state that children who watch a lot of television learn to be passive and expect entertainment for stimulation.
3. Watching a lot of television can have an adverse effect on children's spontaneous play or play games that happen in independent play groups.
4. The constant camera and focal changes, and the viewers point of reference changing so frequently contributes to a short attention span and need for

"instant gratification".

5. Children learn by doing. They learn from experience. Children learn social skills and develop their bodies when they play with others. Children learn to express themselves creatively when they make things.
6. By overindulging in TV children learn to be passive. They expect to be entertained. TV gets between the viewer and the actual experience being viewed. Instead of playing with friends at the playground children watch TV characters playing with "their" friends.
7. Play is an important skill enhancer. We need to safeguard that TV does not get in the way of a child having her own experiences as opposed to those of the TV characters.
8. The less time children spend watching TV the better off they probably will be.
9. Commerical television teaches children how to spend money. Grown-ups know how to sift through the wide range of advertising claims and separate fact from exaggerations. The problem, though, is that most preschoolers do not know how to do this.

**To the Trainer:**

Review the handout sheet, "Treat TV With T.L.C.", and the Getting Involved booklet: Your Child and TV (especially pages 9 through 16). With this background information you can proceed in discussing TV viewing suggestions and the handouts provided in this workshop guide.

**Statements:**

Children learn from the things they watch on television, regardless of positive or negative. Since children spend much time in front of the TV it is important to help them learn to selectively choose programs.

Handout: Refer to the handout - "Program Selection Criteria"

**Activity:** Using the "Program Selection Criteria"

**To the Trainer:**

This activity is an exercise to help parents select television programs and "run" them through the selection criteria.

Materials needed:

- Handout: "Program Selection Criteria"
- Used TV guides, TV programming lists, etc.

Procedure: (for 15 participants)

1. Select a variety of familiar TV shows/programs with descriptions from a TV programming guide. (This can be done individually to provide the greatest variety and type of program, or select 3 for each small group).
2. Review the program and description and use the Selection Criteria for written or verbal responses.
3. Share responses and discuss.

# WORKSHOP CLOSING

*1. Select all or some of the TV handouts and review with parents for their use at home.
2. Recount key areas discussed during the workshop.
3. Review the "Treat TV With T.L.C." Environmental display and handout and/or the "Points to keep in Mind" from the Getting Involved booklet.
4. Encourage response and feedback.
5. Summarize using "Tips to Share" and the "Getting Involved: Your Child and TV" booklet.

*highly recommended

**Tips to Share** - Summary

- Parents should try and acquaint themselves with the programs that are being offered so that they can play an active part in the child's television viewing.
- You and your child could sit down with a guide to the week's shows to discuss and select them together.
- Your selection could be made on a daily basis to fit around the events of the day and to match your child's mood.
- After watching a program, follow it up with a discussion or conversation about what went on and talk about its "quality".
- Be there to watch the program with your child. Your presence will add a more personal and human dimension to the viewing.
- TV is no less and no more than what we make of it!

# ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY

Workshop Activity handout:

*What do you know about Children's TV

1) By the time a child has finished high school, he has spent 11,000 hours in classrooms. How many hours were spent watching television during those years?
   2,000 hours  15,000 hours
   10,000 hours  25,000 hours

2) Is there any relationship between televised violence and aggressive behavior in children?
   definitely yes  definitely no  probably yes  probably no

3) Which network(s) run children's programs with no commercials?
   ABC  NBC  PBS  CBS

(4) Which are the two most commonly advertised products on programs designed for children (circle two):
   toothpaste  fish  milk  apples  candy
   cookies  toys  snack foods  cheese  cereals  lettuce
   vitamin pills  soap  peanut butter  carrots  juice

5) Food is often advertised on Saturday morning children's TV. What percentage of the food ads are for nutritious foods such as fruit, vegetables, meat, break or milk?
   4%  5%  12%  28%

6) Children's programs broadcast during the weekdays before 6:00 P.M. contain more minutes of advertising than programs broadcast during adult prime time.
   true  false

7) The National Association of Broadcasters' 'Television Code' states: "Children shall not be directed to purchase or to ask a parent or other adult to buy a product or service for them." Who enforces the code?
   a special board  the FCC  TV station  the police

8) How many network programs especially designed for young children are aired Monday through Friday in the daytime on commerical TV?
   one  three  seven  fifteen

*ACT Guide to Children's TV

# ICE BREAKER: WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT CHILDREN'S TV

*Answer Key

1) 15,000 hours - this may even be a conservative average.

2) Yes - the 1971 Surgeon General's investigation indicates that watching violent TV effects children.

3) Public Broadcasting System (PBS).

4) Any of the Following: cereals, snack foods, toys, candy, cookies.

5) Less than 4% of food ads on Saturday A.M. TV are for nutritious foods like fruits, vegetables, or breads.

6) True - Weekday children's programs contain twelve minutes of non-program material per hour compared to 9½ minutes per hour during adult prime time.

7) No one - it is voluntary. In fact, the Westinghouse group of stations withdrew from the

8) One - Captain Kangaroo

*ACT Guide to Children's TV

# TV FACT SHEET

1. 98% of U.S. homes, or 72.9 million homes, have a television set.
2. 32 million homes have more than one set.
3. On Sunday nights at 9 P.M. about 110 million people in the U.S. – or almost half the population – are watching television.
4. The "average" American family of five has the TV on 6.2 hours per day.
5. In 1978, LAVERNE AND SHIRLEY was the top-rated prime time program.
6. The typical one hour TV drama cost $400,000 to produce in 1978-79; the typical made-for-TV movie cost about $1,200,000.
7. A single 30 second TV commercial can cost up to $200,000 to produce.
8. In 1979, it cost an advertiser $80,000 to place a 30 second ad on 60 MINUTES. Super Bowl 1981 $550,000 per MINUTE. Rerun 1 A.M. $60,000 per MINUTE.
9. The typical half-hour network news program contains about 22 minutes of news.
10. The "average" news item runs no longer than 45 seconds.
11. 45% of American homes watch news during dinner.
12. Two thirds of Americans get "most" of their news from television.
13. A U.S. government study in 1977 showed men outnumbered women on prime time TV drama almost 3 to 1.
14. From 1969-77, more than six out of ten major TV characters were involved in violence.
15. In 1977, there were over 6 acts of violence per hour of TV drama.
16. A 1973 study showed that heavy TV viewers (4 or more hours per day) were more likely than light viewers (2 hours or fewer per day) to:

    – overestimate the proportion of people employed as athletes, entertainers, and professionals
    – overestimate the crime rate for their area
    – overestimate their chances of being victims of violent crimes

Source: Unknown

## *Program Selection Criteria

Before selecting television programs suitable for children's viewing it may be helpful to ask the following questions:

1. For Whom Is The Program Designed?
   - young children
   - children from six to eleven
   - teenagers
   - adults only
   - all ages

   The program fails if it is too complicated for young children;
   - if it is too simplistic for older children;
   - if it is too diffuse in its approach so that on one likes it;
   - if it is totally unsuitable for its audience, because of subject matter, approach, treatment.

2. How Much Violence Is There?
   - The program succeeds if the violence is an integral part of the plot and essential to its development, but not excessive.
   - The program fails if there is an excessive amount of violence used merely to add excitement and to attract the attention of child viewers.

3. How Appropriate Is a Situation Comedy?
   - The program succeeds if the characters are multi-dimensional and develop over the length of the series;
   - if the characters form meaningful relationships within the humorous context of the program;
   - if the series occasionally incorporates important social messages;
   - if the program avoids directing humor at one particular segment of society.
   - The program fails if the humor consistently insults one particular group.
   - if the situations are cruel, unpleasant or sadistic;
   - if the children misinterpret the program's humor in ways that you find disturbing;
   - if an excessively loud laugh track is used to punctuate every line.

4. How Scary is Scary?
   - The program succeeds if the episodes and incidents are an integral part of the plot, but not terrifying or upsetting to child viewers.
   - The program fails if the scariness is added only to give excitement to a story of poor quality;
   - if incidents are frightening beyond the limits acceptable for the age range of its audience.

5. How Are the Characters Portrayed?
   The presentation and portrayal of characters on TV is a sensitive and important issue. Statistics show that white males predominate on both adult and children's programs, and that the "bad guys" are often dark, foreign, and non-English speaking.

   When you watch a children's program, try to decide whether the characters are realistically portrayed or whether they are stereotypes.
   - The program succeeds if the characters are convincing;
   - if the characters within a program demonstrate a diversity of backgrounds, views, and interests.
   - The program fails if the casting of characters consistently shows



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stereotyped thinking, i.e., bad guys dark, good guys blond, women foolish;
- if your child imitates the characters in a manner that you find disturbing.

6. What About the Plot?
Once the characters in a series have been established, story lines are developed. Dialogue is then filled out by script writers. The choice of topics for story lines may depend on the producer, the executive producer, the director, the writer, or in some cases the actors in the cast.

In evaluating a program's suitability for young viewers, it is important to remember that a child's understanding of a television story may differ from an adult's. Researchers have found that many children cannot accurately repeat a television story line until age seven or eight. Social lessons or implications that are perfectly clear to older children may become mixed moral messages for younger viewers. Some important questions to ask about your child's viewing include:

- Can your child differentiate television fiction from television fact?
- Does your child understand the plot's development?
- Are the moral values implied in the story acceptable to you?
- Does the plot falsify historic events beyond an acceptable point of dramatic license?
- Do you consider such falsification misleading and/or dangerous?

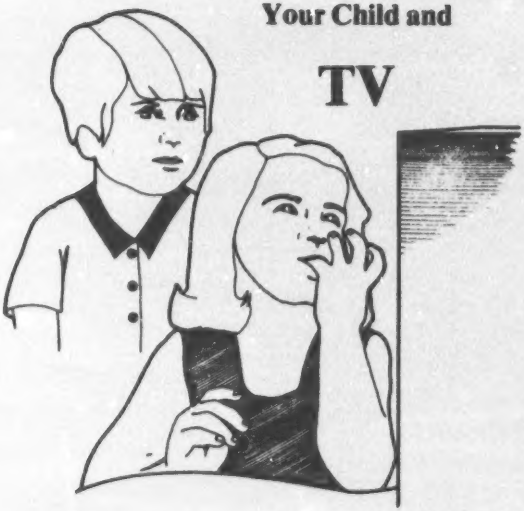
7. What Happens After the Program?
Many experts are concerned about children's reactions to television. Several studies (see bibliography) show that children may act out incidents, may show more aggression or cooperation after certain types of programs, and may pursue suggestions implied in programs.
- The program succeeds if the child recognizes what the program has been about and can talk about it if desired;
- if the child wants to pursue constructive follow-up activities related to the program.
- The program fails if the child is confused about what the program meant and is disturbed by some of its incidents or events.

8. What About Interruptions?
Commercials, public service announcements, and promotions for other programs, together with the usual barrage of station identifications, can mean confusing interruptions.

Broadcasters are responsible for what goes on the air between children's programs just as they are responsible for the programs themselves. Look carefully for:
- Commercials promoting products unhealthy or hazardous to children.
- Commericals that exploit a child's trust.
- Commercials that mislead, exaggerate, or overstate a product's attributes.
- Public service announcements that are not directed at children.
- Promos and commercials for adult films.
- Promos for adult programs showing disturbing scenes.
- News announcements that can confuse or upset children.

*Act Guide to Children's TV

# Your Child and TV



# HOW MUCH DO YOU WATCH?

Leave this on top of your set.

To start, find out how much TV you and other members of your family watch in an average week. Use this form to fill in the total hours you spend viewing each day, and then total up your hours for the week.

Family members write in your names here.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| MONDAY | | | | |
| TUESDAY | | | | |
| WEDNESDAY | | | | |
| THURSDAY | | | | |
| FRIDAY | | | | |
| SATURDAY | | | | |
| SUNDAY | | | | |
| TOTAL HOURS | | | | |

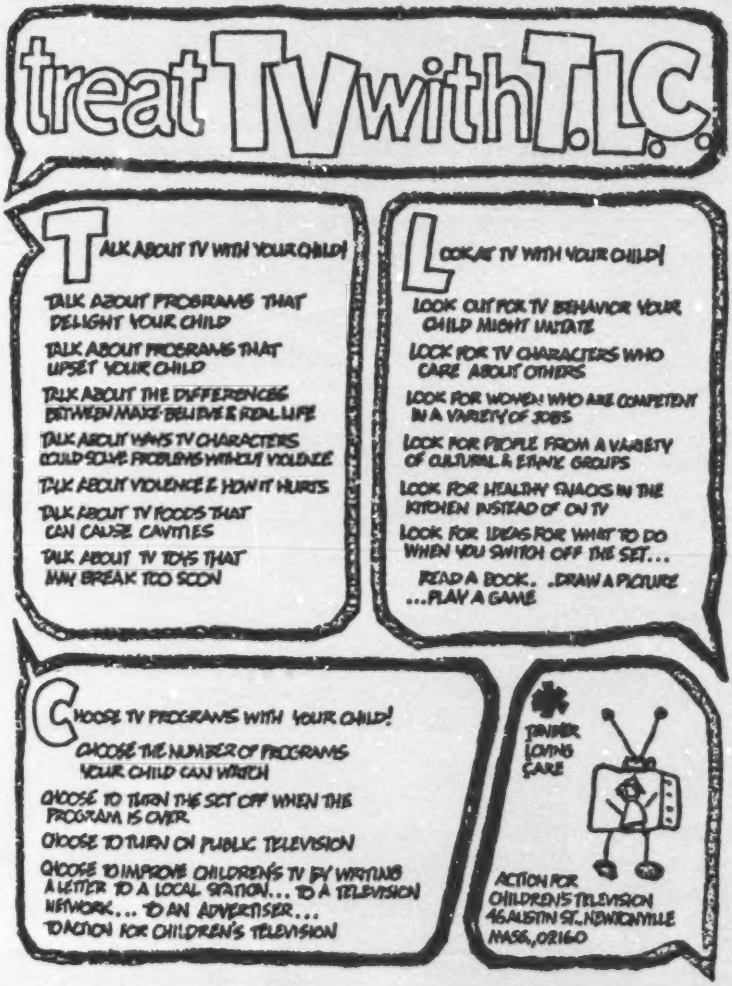
*What the results mean. . .*
They could mean different things. To find out, consider these questions:

- Were you surprised by the time you spent with television? Was it more or less than you thought?
- Do you remember times when the set was just "on", with no one watching? If so why was it left on?
- How much time was TV viewing a family activity? What kinds of shows were popular with everyone? Which shows were not?
- Did you talk about those shows you watched as a family? What kinds of discussions did you have?
- Did you use your newspaper TV listings or *TV Guide* in helping you to choose what to watch? Or did you just turn on the set to see what was on?
- Would you want to change the way TV is part of your family's life? If so, how?

ACT's poster is designed to raise specific questions about the content and quality of TV programming and advertising, including the portrayal of women and cultural minorities.

## ENVIRONMENTAL DISPLAY

**Figure 3**


treat TV with T.L.C.
TALK ABOUT TV WITH YOUR CHILD!
TALK ABOUT PROGRAMS THAT DELIGHT YOUR CHILD
TALK ABOUT PROGRAMS THAT UPSET YOUR CHILD
TALK ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MAKE-BELIEVE & REAL LIFE
TALK ABOUT WAYS TV CHARACTERS COULD SOLVE PROBLEMS WITHOUT VIOLENCE
TALK ABOUT VIOLENCE & HOW IT HURTS
TALK ABOUT TV FOODS THAT CAN CAUSE CAVITIES
TALK ABOUT TV TOYS THAT MAY BREAK TOO SOON
LOOK AT TV WITH YOUR CHILD!
LOOK OUT FOR TV BEHAVIOR YOUR CHILD MIGHT IMITATE
LOOK FOR TV CHARACTERS WHO CARE ABOUT OTHERS
LOOK FOR WOMEN WHO ARE COMPETENT IN A VARIETY OF JOBS
LOOK FOR PEOPLE FROM A VARIETY OF CULTURAL & ETHNIC GROUPS
LOOK FOR HEALTHY SNACKS IN THE KITCHEN INSTEAD OF ON TV
LOOK FOR IDEAS FOR WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SWITCH OFF THE SET...
READ A BOOK.. .DRAW A PICTURE
...PLAY A GAME
CHOOSE TV PROGRAMS WITH YOUR CHILD!
CHOOSE THE NUMBER OF PROGRAMS YOUR CHILD CAN WATCH
CHOOSE TO TURN THE SET OFF WHEN THE PROGRAM IS OVER
CHOOSE TO TURN ON PUBLIC TELEVISION
CHOOSE TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S TV BY WRITING A LETTER TO A LOCAL STATION... TO A TELEVISION NETWORK... TO AN ADVERTISER... TO ACTION FOR CHILDREN'S TELEVISION
TRAINER LOVING CARE
ACTION FOR CHILDREN'S TELEVISION
46 AUSTIN ST. NEWTONVILLE MASS. 02160

Source: Taken from "How to treat TV with TLC, The Act Guide to Childrens Television



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# HOME-ACTIVITY DIARY

| | MON. | TUES. | WED. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7–8 A.M. | | | |
| 8–9 A.M. | | | |
| 9–10 A.M. | | | |
| 10–11 A.M. | | | |
| 11–12 A.M. | | | |
| 12–1 P.M. | | | |
| 1–2 P.M. | | | |
| 2–3 P.M. | | | |
| 3–4 P.M. | | | |
| 4–5 P.M. | | | |
| 5–6 P.M. | | | |
| 6–7 P.M. | | | |
| 7–8 P.M. | | | |

**SUGGESTED KEY**

Watched TV

Read

Played outside

School

Slept

Went to friends

This is to be completed for one full week. Keep it handy and compare how many

## DIARY

| THURS. | FRI. | SAT. | SUN. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
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| | | | |
| | | | |

 Ate

 Did homework

 Went out with parents

Played with brother/sister

Played alone inside

Design other symbols for your other activities.

squares are filled in with TV versus your other actitivies.



HANDOUT

# EXPERIMENTS FOR YOUR TV VIEWING

Experiment 1: The Turn-Off
Try setting aside a definite period of time for not watching TV at all. It might be a few days, a full week, a weekend. But make it a definite time, and keep a careful

## 1. EXPERIMENT: THE TURN-OFF

| | MON. | TUES. | WED. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7–8 A.M. | | | |
| 8–9 A.M. | | | |
| 9–10 A.M. | | | |
| 10–11 A.M. | | | |
| 11–12 A.M. | | | |
| 12–1 P.M. | | | |
| 1–2 P.M. | | | |
| 2–3 P.M. | | | |
| 3–4 P.M. | | | |
| 4–5 P.M. | | | |
| 5–6 P.M. | | | |
| 6–7 P.M. | | | |
| 7–8 P.M. | | | |

**What did you do when you turned off TV? (You can use the Key to Activities from the Diary)**

diary of what you do instead of watching TV. You can then compare that with your chart for viewing times. Maybe you could ask your parents or grandparents what they did when they didn't have television.

## THE TURN-OFF

| THURS. | FRI. | SAT. | SUN. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
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| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
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| | | | |
| | | | |

Source: Act Guide to Childrens Television



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# ENVIRONMENTAL DISPLAY

## POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND –

- Children like to watch television. TV can have positive and negative effects on children's development.
- Parents can help make TV a positive and educational experience for their children.
- Try to watch some TV with your children.
- Talk with your children about what they see on TV.
- Select and limit what and how much TV your children watch.
- Select programs especially developed for young children.
- Encourage your children to be involved in a wide variety of activities. TV is one of many experiences.
- TV differs from children's other experiences. Point out what makes TV different and how commercials work.

Parents can use TV to help their children learn.

Source: this is taken from the Getting Involved Booklet – Use on a larger poster and refer to it often. . .

# WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM

_____ Workshop

Trainer: _____ Date_____

Name _____

1. The workshop information was: (check as many boxes as you wish)
   - ____ new
   - ____ enjoyable
   - ____ clear
   - ____ useful
   - ____ too short
   - ____ just what I need
   - ____ repetitive
   - ____ not enjoyable
   - ____ confusing
   - ____ useless
   - ____ too long

2. The most enjoyable part of the workshop was:

3. The least enjoyable part of the workshop was:

4. If you were to add something to this workshop what would it be?

5. If you were to leave out a part of this workshop what would it be?

6. Would you like another workshop in this area? ____ yes ____ no

7. Overall this workshop was:
   ____ poor ____ fair ____ good ____ very good ____ excellent

THE BEST OF BEB
MADE BY TEACHERS
COMPILED BY SEDL, AUSTIN, TX.
FUNDED BY ACYF, WASHINGTON, DC